recently (972) at Presthlava and Dorystolon won the greatest battles of the age, saved the Empire, and shown what disciplined courage could do against 60,000 invading Russians, formidable and natural fighters, whom they drove over the Danube with two thirds of their number dead or taken. Such an army as Zirnisces had then led, in whole or part, might at any moment be landed on the Apulian shore.

Uncertain as the destiny of Lower Italy seemed at the opening of the eleventh century, yet two developments seemed to promise a greater stability and a greater freedom of external forces than had so far been effected. These were a continuous struggle among the Lombard states which seemed likely to end in the supremacy of one or the other, and the communal movement aiming everywhere at full civic freedom.

The Lombard duchies seemed to be aiming at unity and concentration again after two hundred years of disintegration. If unity in Lower Italy was to come from the principalities of Benevento, Capua, and Salerno, it would be possible only by internal concentration, by the dominance of one of the three, and finally by the acquisition of military

resources such as the dukes had not yet found, lacking as they were in marine power and in native armies. After-history shows that in their own race the warlike vigour had sunk very low and that the mercenary bands such as the ambitious princes sought in the inter-ducal struggle could